

Minnesota Commerce Department receives MnSEIA's 1st Excellence in Minnesota Solar Implementation Award

Division of Energy Resources recognized for its solar leadership

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For Immediate Release:

SAINT PAUL — The Minnesota Department of Commerce, Division of Energy Resources accepted the first-annual Excellence in Minnesota Solar Implementation Award from the Minnesota Solar Energy Industry Association (MnSEIA) on November 5, 2014. The award, presented at MnSEIA's first-annual Midwest Gateway to Solar Conference, recognizes champions whose work embodies the highest principles of leadership and who work to realize solar energy's tremendous potential.

"I proudly accept this award on behalf of the Commerce Department's Division of Energy Resources," said Janet Streff, manager of the State Energy Office in the Division of Energy Resources. "We are working hard to implement the 2013 energy legislation initiatives. Without the dedicated efforts of our staff and our private and public partners in this work, we would not be where we are today."

Minnesota is becoming a solar power house. Just this week, Solar Power Rocks ranked Minnesota the 10th best solar state in the country based on our solar programs and policies—up from No. 24 last year.

Commerce Commissioner Mike Rothman said, "We are growing solar energy wisely to meet the Minnesota

Solar Energy Standard. Programs such as our Made in Minnesota Solar Incentive Program are helping to reach our goals of achieving good jobs and a strong renewable energy sector.”

Dustin Denison, president of MnSEIA, presented the award and acknowledged the hard work of the Energy Division leading up to the 2013 Clean Energy Jobs Omnibus Bill, which established the many pro-solar policies and programs. “We are thankful to the Commerce Department’s Division of Energy Resources team for getting programs and projects launched in a timely manner,” he said. “Without their work and commitment, many solar developers and installers would have lost an entire install season.”

The Minnesota Solar Energy Standard establishes for certain utilities a standard to obtain 1.5 percent of retail electric sales from solar energy by 2020, and it creates a goal of obtaining 10 percent of the entire state’s retail electricity sales from solar by 2030.

[The Made in Minnesota \(MiM\) Solar Incentive Program](#) is administered by the Department of Commerce with an annual budget of up to \$15 million for ten years, including \$250,000 per year for solar thermal rebates. MiM provides an incentive for consumers who install photovoltaic (PV) and solar thermal systems using solar modules and collectors certified as manufactured in Minnesota.

Solar capacity in Minnesota is expected to grow from 14 megawatts in 2013 to about 400 megawatts in 2020, nearly a 30-fold increase. Incentive programs, including Commerce’s Made in Minnesota Solar Incentive Program and Xcel Energy’s Solar*Rewards Program, support of community solar gardens, and several other initiatives have helped spur solar growth in Minnesota.

[MnSEIA](#) represents and serves Minnesota energy professionals and solar energy users. It promotes the use of solar energy and conservation that best serves the public interest to improve the environment for a sustainable future. MnSEIA’s first-annual conference attracted 400 people, including solar installers, vendors, developers, distributors, manufacturers, job trainers, labor unions, utilities, state agencies, and more.

The Commerce Department’s Division of Energy Resources focuses on accelerating market acceptance of high-efficiency and renewable energy technologies and practices.

